

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification as follows:

Page 1, beginning at line 4 and before the subheading "Field of the Invention," insert the following:

--This application is a national stage filing under 35 U.S.C. § 371 of International Application No. PCT/EP2004/052750, filed November 2, 2004, which claims priority to EP 03024847.0, filed October 31, 2003. The contents of these applications are expressly incorporated herein by reference to their entireties. --

Page 2, the paragraph beginning at line 27:

In accordance with embodiments of the invention, ~~as embodied and broadly described herein, methods and systems are provided consistent with the principles in this specification provide a method~~ for computerized processing of invoices[[,]] which a company has presented to two or more customers, ~~comprising:~~ In accordance with one embodiment, a method is provided that includes selecting, from a plurality of invoices, ~~such~~ invoices[[,]] which are due within a preselectable time or on a preselectable date and the balance of which is larger than a preselectable first value, and assigning a first state to ~~said~~ the selected invoices.

Page 3, the paragraph beginning at line 8:

Applying [[the]] methods, ~~e.g. by using the system, is insofar advantageous as the introduction of this state concept greatly reduces~~ consistent with embodiments of

~~the invention may reduce the expenditures for search~~ searching and querying the ~~data-~~
~~bases~~ databases and ~~increases~~ increase ~~[[the]]~~ system performance, particularly if huge
amounts of invoices have to be screened.

Page 3, the paragraph beginning at line 29:

Embodiments of the invention are further directed to ~~[[a]]~~ computer systems, ~~[[a]]~~
computer programs, ~~[[a]]~~ computer readable ~~medium~~ media and ~~[[a]]~~ carrier signals,
each ~~comprising~~ including program code or instructions for computerized processing of
invoices~~[[,]]~~ which a company has presented to, for example, two or more customers
~~according to the method and its embodiments.~~ Embodiments consistent with the ~~[[The]]~~
invention ~~[[is]]~~ are further directed to ~~[[an]]~~ electronic data structures having one or more
data fields ~~[[fro]]~~ for one or more states.

Page 7, the paragraph beginning at line 25:

The method as described in the summary section may be performed by using
such electronic data records. A set of such records may be queried to extract such
records, which meet the condition according to which the respective invoices are due
within a preselectable time or on a preselectable date and the balance of which invoices
is larger than a preselectable first value. Subsequently, a first state is assigned to the
thus selected invoices. The assignment may be implemented, for example, by ~~means-~~
~~of~~ a program module starting automatically at preselectable times or time intervals
querying the invoice data and writing states into state fields of the data records
according to predefineable conditions. Another ~~An other~~ example is that a list of such
preselected invoices may presented to a user by ~~means of~~ a graphical user interface

[[an]] and the user may then select states to be assigned to the selected invoices using selections ~~by means of selecting means~~ presented to him in the context of the user interface.

Page 15, the paragraph beginning at line 7:

A further embodiment of [[the]] methods consistent with the present invention is characterized in that the preselectable first, second and third values are such that a preselectable second percentage of the outstanding active debts or turnover of the company is covered. The second percentage may, for example, range from 70 or 80 or 90 to 100 %, including all interim values, depending on the intention of the company. The selection according to this embodiment ~~is insofar advantageous as it helps~~ ensuring may help ensure that unselected invoices represent only a comparatively small percentage (100 - second percentage) of the company's turnover.

Page 28, the paragraph beginning at line 34:

Fig. [[5]] 7 shows an example of a data structure of an invoice for the purposes of illustration. [[The]] In the example of Fig. 7, the data structure is implemented as a table 701 having a plurality of columns. According to an embodiment of the invention, a column 707 for the first and second date of the invoice is contained. The fields of the column 707 contain strings of a length of at least four characters. The first two characters are defined to represent the first state, the second two characters represent the second state. Further, groups of characters may be used to define further states, depending on the length of the field. Depending on the number of states, one character per state may be sufficient. Alternatively n columns for n states can be used as well.

Combinations of both alternative are also possible. The individual data records of the invoices are implemented as individual lines of table 701. The state column 707 of table 701 comprises one state field for each invoice. In a table 702, a description is assigned to a state. By means of table 703, one or more events 1 to n are assigned to a state. By means of table 704, one or more proposals 1 to n are assigned to a state. By means of table [[505]] 705, one or more events 1 to n are assigned to a state. Tables 702 to 705 are linked to table 701 by the state column. In a table 706, values of variables may be stored. The conditions, which are applied when querying the list of invoices, may be stored in a table as well.